

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-16 and 19-34 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 20-22, 25 and 32 are amended.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the courtesies extended by Examiner Gauthier during the January 8 telephonic interview with Applicant's representative, Mr. Oren. The substance of the interview is incorporated in the above amendments and the following remarks.

The Office Action objects to claims 20-22 because of an informality. The above amendments amend claims 20-22 to depend from claim 1. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 32 and 34 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) by U.S. Patent 5,592,473 to Matern et al. (hereafter Matern). The Office Action also rejects claims 1, 4-5, 13, 15, 21-22, 25 and 27-28 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Matern in view of U.S. Patent 4,593,395 to Shouhamer Immink et al. (hereafter Shouhamer). Additionally, the Office Action rejects claims 2-3, 12, 14, 20 and 33 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Matern in view of Shouhamer and further in view of U.S. Patent 6,205,206 to Hersh et al. (hereafter Hersh). Still further, the Office Action rejects claims 6, 7, 9, 11, 16, 23 and 29-30 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Matern in view of Schouhamer and further in view of U.S. Patent 6,069,888 to LaRocca. The Office Action also rejects claims 8, 10, 24 and 31 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Matern in view of Schouhamer, LaRocca and further in view of Hersh. Still further, the Office Action rejects claims 19 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Matern in view of Schouhamer and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,329,579 to Brunson. The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1 recites a system matching circuit and a system matching section configured to couple to a private switching system, which is a system of higher rank, so as to interface all information in relation to a call and management of a call including call-related messages, exchanging voice messages, recording and reproduction of processed voice data and perform interfacing for communication between a control section and the private switching system, which is a system of higher rank. Independent claim 1 further recites a communication controller to manage a state of each channel matching with the private switching system, which is a system of higher rank, process channel errors, and maintain and repair the channel and wherein the communication controller directly and automatically determines a busy or nonresponsive state of the subscriber in response to an incoming communication from a terminal and transfers the call to the system matching circuit and system matching section.

Matern does not teach or suggest all these features. That is, Matern does not relate to a voice mail service system for a private switching system in which private switching system is a system of higher rank. Furthermore, Matern does not relate to the system matching section to interface all information in relation to a call and management of a call including call-related messages, exchanging voice messages, recording and reproduction of processed voice data, and perform interfacing for communication between a control section and a private switching system which is a system of higher rank. Still further, Matern does not relate to a communication controller to manage a state of each channel matching with the private switching system, which is a system of higher rank, process channel errors and maintain and repair the channel and wherein the communication controller directly and automatically determines a busy or

nonresponsive state of the subscriber in response to an incoming communication from a terminal and transfers the call to the system matching section. There is no suggestion in Matern for these features, especially with regard to a voice mail service system coupled to a private switching system which is a system of higher rank. Matern also does not relate to the communication controller directly and automatically determining a busy or nonresponsive state and transferring a call to the system matching circuit and system matching section. As such, Matern does not teach or suggest all the features of independent claim 1. The other applied references do not suggest the features missing from Matern.

Similarly, Matern and the other applied references do not teach or suggest all the features of independent claims 25 and 32. That is, independent claim 25 recites means directly and automatically determining a communication state of a subscriber in response to an incoming communication as well as means controlling and maintaining operation between the switching system and the voice mail service and a system matching section which interfaces all information in relation to a call and management of a call including call-related messages, exchanging voice messages, recording and reproduction of processed voice data and performs interfacing for communication between a control section and the private switching system. Matern and the other applied references do not teach or suggest all these features.

Similarly, independent claim 32 defines patentable subject matter for at least similar reasons. For example, independent claim 32 recites means directly and automatically determining a communication state of the subscriber in response to an incoming communication, means transferring the incoming communication to a system matching section

wherein the system matching section interfaces all information in relation to a call and management of a call including call-related messages, exchanging voice messages, recording and reproduction of processed voice data and performs interfacing for communication between a control section and the private switching system, which is a system of higher rank. Matern and the other applied references do not teach or suggest these features.

Accordingly, each of independent claims 1, 25 and 32 define patentable subject matter. Each of the dependent claims depends from one of the independent claims and therefore defines patentable subject matter for at least similar reasons. In addition, the dependent claims also recite features that further and independently distinguish over the applied references. For example, dependent claim 2 recites that the voice mail service system is a line card, configured to couple to the private switching system. The Office Action references Hersh's column 2, lines 45-53 as teaching a line card. However, Hersh's alleged line card does not include the features of the voice mail service system recited in independent claim 1. That is, dependent claim 2 recites that the voice mail service system (whose features are recited in claim 1) is a line card. Hersh does not teach or suggest that all the features of a voice mail service system are provided on the line card. Furthermore, there is no suggestion of how Matern may be combined with Hersh so as to provide all the features on a line card. The Office Action never states the motivation to combine these two references and therefore the Office Action fails to make a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

Additionally, dependent claim 15 recites that the private switching system is a system of higher rank than the voice mail system. The Office Action references Matern's column 6, lines

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29-37. However, this does not suggest that the private switching system is a system of higher rank than the voice mail system. This feature is discussed in the present specification, and is not suggested by Matern.

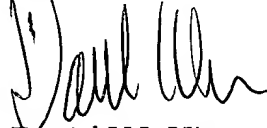
For at least these reasons, each of claims 1-16 and 19-34 define patentable subject matter. Withdrawal of the outstanding rejections is respectfully requested.

### **CONCLUSION**

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-16 and 19-34 are earnestly solicited. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney, **David C. Oren**, at the telephone number listed below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,  
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